

VILLAGE ECHOES

Of the many enquiries the History Society receives, recently one was about a water clock which was once in the Star & Eagle. This strange contraption worked by draining water from a brass reservoir via a tap. This lowered a float which in turn moved cogs and finally the hands. It was made in 1636 by Thomas Mears of "ye towyne of Salisbury".

What happened to it is still unclear; can anybody shed some light on its whereabouts?

Still on the subject of clocks Goudhurst's own clock maker arrived in the village in 1870.

He was Horatio Prickett, born at Furnace Farm Lamberhurst in 1848, of farming stock. As a young man he started his working life as an apprentice to the miller at Bartley Mill. Following his marriage in 1870 he came to Goudhurst where, having swapped the large cog wheels of the mill for the tiny ones in clocks and watches he started his business as a clock and watch maker and jeweller at 1 Weavers Cottages in Church Road. He moved a few doors along Church Road to the opposite end of Weavers Cottages soon after. He remained here a few years before he decided to move once again and had a house and shop built opposite the pond. This is now Mallard House, home of Country Property estate agents.

One of Horatio's undertakings was to go around the big houses winding and adjusting their clocks, travelling by pony & trap even as far as Etchingam. He often got wet through. He suffered from pneumonia which led to galloping consumption from which he died in 1881 aged 33.

Horatio had invented a clock which he never completed making before his untimely death; his widow sold the plan and rights of it to the famous firm of Mappin and Webb for £25.

Horatio's brother carried on the business although it has been reported his widow Ellen sold a Swiss watch to a Mr Spice from her shop in Church Road in 1888. Ellen moved to Hunt's Lane for a short time following Horatio's death, then to Beresford Road before returning to 6 Weavers Cottages where she died in October 1928. A post card in the society's collection shows clocks in the shop window. Her son Sydney and her daughter Cordelia also lived there. Cordelia's son, Leonard, later ran his electrical and cycle sales and repairs business from the premises.

One clock with "H.Prickett Goudhurst" on its dial was owned by Mr J. C. Gripper, headmaster of Goudhurst School (1889 – 1924). Although it should have come to our chairman's family in Mr Prickett's daughter's will, it was put into auction and the family's bid failed to get it.

Local History Society